

SUSTAIN THE EFFORT

Studies have shown that the most challenging aspect of energy efficiency programs aimed at changing behavior is sustaining new behaviors over time. For a variety of reasons, it is very difficult to change ingrained habits and underlying attitudes. (As evidence, recall how many years it took to persuade people to recycle, wear seatbelts, and exercise regularly—and many people still don't do these things, despite the obvious benefits!) Despite these barriers, both Federal mandates and wise energy-use practices indicate that multiple methods to reduce energy use (and keep costs down) are necessary and beneficial. Technology and upgrades that are proven effective in achieving long-term savings must be augmented with enduring efficiency actions by people if continuing energy goals are to be met.

One campaign, regardless of how effective, is not much help if people revert to their former behaviors when the campaign ends. The following sections give some guidelines for sustained behavior change, based on research findings and programs found to be effective.

REACHING NEWCOMERS

Newcomers to your facility, including new hires and short-term employees, should be targeted to keep awareness high as personnel move in and out of an organization. Newcomers typically receive a package of many different kinds of informational materials, but many do not take the time to read all of them.

Thus, do not rely on printed materials in the orientation package to carry the message about the organization's energy efficiency program.

More effective would be a requirement, as part of orientation, to view an energy efficiency video that models the desired behaviors. Newcomers could receive a personal visit or phone call from an energy manager describing the organization's energy efficiency program and offering assistance.

SELF-MOTIVATION/AWARDS

The underlying principle is that motivation from within (self-directed or intrinsic) has been shown more effective in changing energy-use habits than from an outside source (external), including money. Studies have shown that people obtain a great deal of satisfaction from participating in a worthwhile endeavor and behaving in an ecologically responsible fashion. In addition, environmental programs have found that parents sometimes are motivated to take actions that will make a better world for their children. (Other times, their children will motivate them).

These are exactly the attitudes that a long-term effort must capitalize on to succeed. A long-term efficiency

Key members of NASA's Energy Efficiency Board receive the Presidential Award for Leadership in Federal Energy Management from Vice President Dick Cheney.

For more information about energy awards, please visit:
<http://www.eere.energy.gov/femp/services/awards.cfm>



CONCLUSION

effort, therefore, could include reminding employees of the self-satisfaction associated with using energy wisely. The importance of passing along energy efficiency values to children should also be emphasized.

Non-financial, ongoing incentives might include such things as certificates of achievement, public recognition such as having names of energy savers listed in the organization's newsletter, recognition of military personnel by chains of command, the opportunity to be held up as an energy leader or mentor on site, and school award programs. Consider recognizing outstanding contributions by presenting in-house energy management awards. For an example of DOE's in-house awards program, please visit:

<http://www.eere.energy.gov/femp/services/awards.cfm>

Or, to nominate your organization or a group of individuals through FEMP's Federal Energy and Water Management Awards program, see:

http://www.eere.energy.gov/femp/services/awards_fewm.cfm

To identify effective non-financial incentives, solicit feedback from staff members. Test the effect of the incentives by evaluating savings and behavior change after incentives are made available.

COMMITMENT

Personal commitment to take certain energy-efficient actions seems to be one of the best techniques for lasting behavior change. In one study, participants who agreed to have their names published as part of the conservation study used 15% less natural gas and 20% less electricity than the control group. The most encouraging finding is that the differences were still significant 12 months later.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

The foundation for fostering enduring energy-efficient behavior must be built on institutionalization in your organization, especially when strengthened by the culture of your Federal agency. This means that regulations, policy, decisions, and behaviors incorporate energy efficiency as a fundamental value, rather than being imposed or added on. At DOE's Golden Field Office, for example, energy efficiency is part of staff performance evaluations. The ultimate outcome is that staff members incorporate energy efficiency into their daily lives by habit and because it is important to them—like keeping their children immunized.

As a Federal Energy Coordinator, you are in a key position to establish and sustain the type of energy program described in this handbook. The implementation of an effective energy awareness program at your facility is by extension an important piece of saving energy and costs throughout the entire Federal sector. The increased knowledge we gain toward improving energy habits and behaviors in the Federal government will extend to the private sector as well. Saving energy is everyone's business, because it benefits everyone. If we in the Federal government can lead by example to increase energy awareness by our actions and practices, we can make a vital difference for our fellow workers and neighbors, for American taxpayers, for our children, and the world.

